

## **Testimony before the Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee regarding S.B. 374, “An Act Requiring Behavioral Health Assessments for Children”**

Good morning Senator Harp, Representative Walker and Committee members

My name is Nicholas Kornis. I reside in Glastonbury. I am a parent.

I wish to speak in opposition to the proposed bill at hand, S.B. 374, “An Act Requiring Behavioral Health Assessments for Children”

There are several reasons why this proposed bill should be withdrawn:

1] First, this is an invasion of privacy, of the child, and by extension of the family. It could even be considered an unwarranted “search”, forbidden by the Connecticut State Constitution, Article 1, Section 7, and the United States Constitution 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment. There is no probable cause to do this on a mass screening basis.

2] It is not at all clear how this serves the interests of the people, unless there was some cause of action. Where is the need for this? If this is truly seen as a public health problem, this must be defined and solutions based on evidence.

3] This constitutes a violation of parental rights to protect, nurture and educate their children according to their values without intrusion by the state. Fortunately, home schooling provides an option for those families who do not want their child indoctrinated with secular humanist education.

4] The “behavioral health assessment” is not defined, and could potentially contain queries objectionable to parents, or just plain invasive of family life. There is no specification as to how the instrument would be developed, by whom, nor how it would be administered, leaving those decisions to un-elected administrators. The mentioned “health care provider” is not defined. They would be acting as an agent of the State.

5] If the results are disclosed only to the child's parent or guardian, of what value is it to the state? By the time of 6<sup>th</sup> grade, the earliest required assessment, any mental health problems would likely have been evident to the parents. The statement that the results would be confidential, disclosed only to the parent or guardian, is dubious. This is another example of the state inserting itself into the parent-child relationship, analogous to mandated "sex education" at a young age.

6] This proposal is apparently a reaction to the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. I say apparently because there is no rationale offered for justification of this proposed law. In that case, the behavioral problems of the young man were already known, and apparently addressed to some extent, but perhaps intractable. Behavioral assessments are not necessarily going to identify mental illness, let alone predict the probability of violence. If there were actionable findings in a child, what would be done about it?

In summary, this proposed law is overly vague and is reminiscent of a police state mentality, especially when seen along with the draconian gun control measures being considered. It is about control of citizens, for, if they don't comply, they become lawbreakers. It is not going to protect anybody. This government continues to erode our freedoms and take more of our money in the name of some idealistic liberal agenda. This is the Constitution State. So tell me where is the constitutional authority for the state to mandate psychological examinations for our children? Thank you.